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Special Issue on TADs

Welcome to our special October issue of Pulse of Progress, encouraging you to vote YES on Amendment 2 on your ballot whether you vote early or on November 4. This referendum will determine the future of Tax Allocation Districts, an important redevelopment tool, in the state of Georgia. Read on to learn what exactly will be on the ballot, what Amendment 2 means for Georgia's future, and what you can do to support your community. For more information on Amendment 2, visit www.georgiatad.org.

Amendment 2: Vote YES for Georgia's Future

As absentee voting began across Georgia on Monday, you can now vote YES on Amendment 2. Requested absentee ballots have been mailed to voters. In addition, you can cast a ballot in-person at your county registrar's office. To locate your county registrar's office or for further voting information, contact the Secretary of State's office toll-free at 877.725.9797 or visit www.sos.georgia.gov/elections.

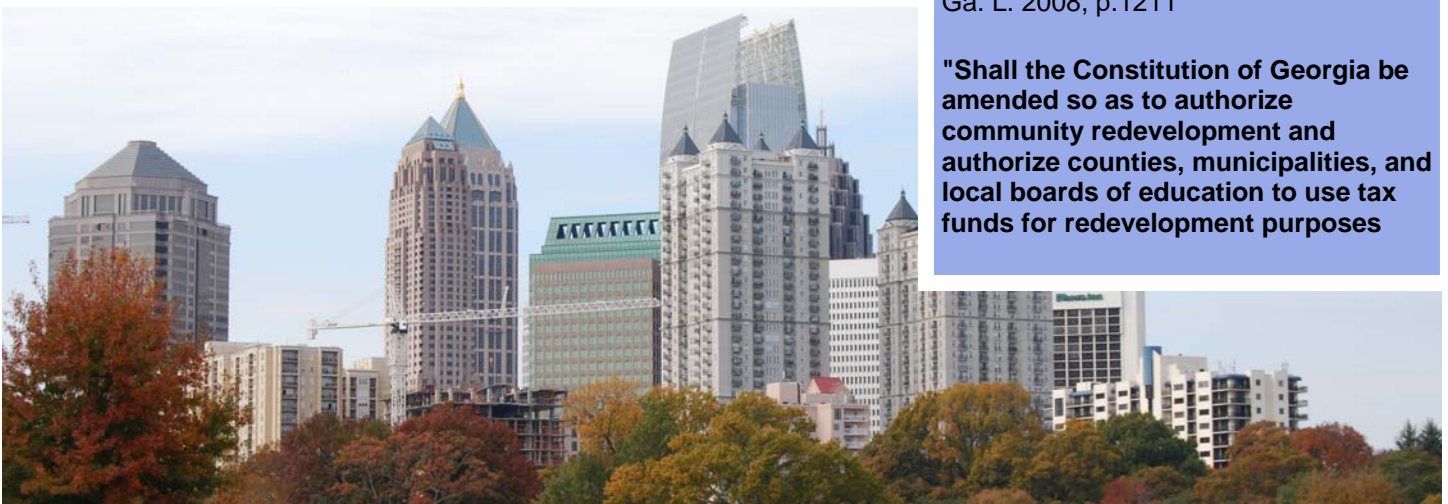
Vote YES on Amendment 2. Vote YES for Georgia's future.

Ballot Language: Amendment 2

To authorize local school districts to use tax funds for community redevelopment purposes

Senate Resolution No. 996
Resolution Act No. 777
Ga. L. 2008, p.1211

"Shall the Constitution of Georgia be amended so as to authorize community redevelopment and authorize counties, municipalities, and local boards of education to use tax funds for redevelopment purposes



What is Amendment 2 all about?

In February 2008, a Georgia Supreme Court ruling took away the right of school districts statewide to invest future financial resources in redevelopment projects. This decision has severely handicapped a valuable redevelopment incentive: tax allocation districts, or TADs. Amendment 2 would restore to each school district the right to choose for itself and its community whether or not to contribute future property tax revenue to a TAD.

TADs have been around for 50 years. Midtown Atlanta's own Atlantic station, a 138-acre former brownfield, is a well known and nationally commended example of a successfully implemented TAD. Today, TADs are a national best practice, approved by the laws of 49 states. In fact, all but three of those 49 states permit the participation of local school districts.



Site of Atlantic Station, c. 1950



Atlantic Station, 2006

The purpose of the upcoming referendum, on the ballot on November 4, 2008, is to restore the ability of local boards of education to opt into a TAD. It's all about restoring local control to schools. Additionally, given the dire state of today's economy and capital markets, TADs will be even more of an asset in attracting investment and jobs to Georgia.

To date, Georgia school districts have chosen to participate in most TADs. School districts enter into a TAD not only by choice, but also based on their own negotiated terms. School boards recognize the positive impact that community revitalization can have on schools, students and their families. If they determine contributing to a TAD is not in their best interest, they can choose to opt out - but only if Amendment 2 is passed. Amendment 2 will restore local control and give school districts the power to choose.

How Can Passing This Amendment Help Parks, Trails And Transit In Georgia's Capital City?

The BeltLine project has extraordinary potential to transform the City of Atlanta. One of the most comprehensive economic development efforts ever undertaken in the City of Atlanta, and the largest, most wide-ranging urban redevelopment currently underway in the U.S., the BeltLine will combine greenspace, trails, transit, and new development along 22 miles of historic rail segments that encircle the urban core of Atlanta.

Over the past 20 years, metro Atlanta's growth has occurred in widely spread and disconnected pockets of development which have strained the region's quality of life and economic growth. By attracting and organizing some of the region's future growth around parks, transit, and trails, the BeltLine will help change the pattern of regional sprawl in the coming decades and lead to a more vibrant and livable Atlanta with an enhanced quality of life.

To see the BeltLine for yourself, take a free bus tour offered by the BeltLine Partnership. Tours run every Friday and Saturday morning. For more information, visit www.beltline.org. The BeltLine needs your vote in support of Amendment 2 this November!



Historic Fourth Ward Park



How Does Passing Amendment 2 Help Georgia's Children?

A school in a blighted area is generally slow to improve, or may not at all, unless the area surrounding it improves first. TADs attract investment to areas that have high concentrations of poverty. They help bring life back to these communities. Children who live in redeveloped communities perform better in school because of several factors:

- a stronger mix of households of varying incomes
- increased diversity and cultural awareness
- more parental involvement in schools
- decreased crime in communities where kids live
- more positive role models in the community
- better nutrition from new retailers and food stores, which follow the increase in households and disposable income

TADs improve neighborhoods, and improved neighborhoods attract new residents, new jobs and new businesses - all of which help enrich schools. When you support Amendment 2, you are supporting schools and communities.

How Do TADs Help Public Housing Authorities Turn Blighted Projects Into Vital Communities?

TADs are helping to rid Atlanta of concentrated poverty. Atlanta Journal-Constitution columnist Jim Wooten summed up the mission of the Atlanta Housing Authority in a July 25, 2008 editorial titled "Atlanta's public housing revamp shows real hope for the future."

"One of America's great success stories is here in Atlanta...What the Atlanta Housing Authority has done, executive director Renee Glover specifically, is the road map for conservatives eager to reverse the inevitable slide to dependency. Essentially it involves razing the complexes that anchored generation after generation of vulnerable women for the convenience of the predators who passed through their lives. That was never the intent when the nation's first public housing project, Techwood Homes, was constructed here in 1936. Sadly, that is what large-scale public housing projects became. With federal demolition permits now granted, Atlanta will become the first major city in America to rid itself of large public housing projects for families."

It's worth noting that this worthy cause is partially funded by TAD dollars.



Before: Perry Homes

Downtown Atlanta's Westside TAD was initially created to help facilitate the redevelopment of Techwood Homes, located just north of what is now Centennial Olympic Park. The high-crime area was an example of everything that was wrong with public housing and the resulting concentration of poverty in America. AHA demolished the project in 1995, and TAD dollars helped spark private re-investment in the area, although not in the project directly. Centennial Place Elementary, the elementary school that serves the students of the newly revitalized, mixed-income community, received \$5 million of TAD funds and today is a top-performing school in the state.

TAD funds also contributed to the revitalization of two of Atlanta's most distressed public housing projects: Capitol Homes, in the Eastside TAD, and Perry Homes, in the Perry-Bolton TAD. AHA received \$5.3 million for the redevelopment of Capitol Homes, which it transformed into the now vibrant Capitol Gateway mixed-income community on Metropolitan Parkway. AHA is also slated to receive over \$10 million towards the development of West Highlands, on the former site of Perry Homes. The redevelopment of both of these housing projects has had an impact on the surrounding communities: the quality of life there has dramatically improved and new development abounds.



After: the West Highlands development

Other housing projects slated for demolition that may benefit from TAD dollars include Grady Homes in the Eastside TAD and Bankhead Courts and Bolton Homes in the D.L. Hollowell TAD.

Upcoming Economic Development Events

October 15, **Historic Fourth Ward Park Groundbreaking.** 10:30 a.m. at the future site of Historic Fourth Ward Park (approx. 695 North Avenue, 30308), behind City Hall East. Come celebrate the beginning of construction of the first new BeltLine park with the community that made it happen.

October 15-16, **Venture Atlanta.** Omni Hotel at CNN Center. Venture Atlanta will bring together top-tier venture capitalists with Georgia's most innovative emerging technology companies. For more information contact the Venture Atlanta Coalition at (770) 298-4202.

October 16, **2008 Year-end BeltLine Quarterly Briefing.** 6-8 p.m. Atlanta Public Schools auditorium, 130 Trinity ave. Agenda includes 2008 BeltLine highlights and general update, BeltLine Partnership update, community engagement update, master planning and adoption process update. For more information contact Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. at www.beltline.org or (404) 614-8300.

October 18, **BeltLine 5K and West End Community Celebration.** 8:30 a.m., ribbon-cutting and check-in; 9:30 a.m, 5K. Gordon-White Park, at the corner of Ralph David Abernathy Blvd. and White St. Join the residents of Southwest Atlanta for a run, jog or walk through the Historic West End and on the new BeltLine trail. Community Celebration follows 5K and goes until mid-afternoon, giving guests a taste of the community's rich culture. Register for the race at www.beltline.org

October 19-22, **IEDC Annual Conference: The Next Billion - Mobility, Flexibility, Agility, Livability.** Hyatt Regency Atlanta. For more information visit www.iedconline.org.

October 21, **Fort McPherson Restoration Advisory Board.** 7-9 p.m., "The Commons" at Fort McPherson. The board will review environmental issues prior to redevelopment at its quarterly meeting, open to the public. For more information or to request e-mail notices of quarterly meetings contact board co-chair Paul Brightbill at (404) 755-6541 or paulbrightbill@gmail.com.

October 21, **7th Annual Fall Affordable Housing Conference.** 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., State Bar of Georgia Conference Center, 104 Marietta Street. Registration is \$45 for members, \$70 for nonmembers before October 5; \$60 for members and \$85 for nonmembers after October 5. For more information or to register online visit www.gstand.org.

October 29, **Small Business Monthly Information Session.** 5 p.m. at the offices of the Atlanta Development Authority. To RSVP, send an e-mail to cbrackett@atlantada.com or call (404) 614-8295.

October 30, **2008 Business Growth Expo.** 7 a.m. - 2:30p.m., Cobb Galleria Centre. For more information or to register online visit <http://atlanta.bizjournals.com/atlanta/event/431>.

November 6, **2008 Downtown Development Day.** 7:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., breakfast program, panel discussions and development expo. 12:45 - 2 p.m., optional downtown your and boxed lunch. Marriott Atlanta Marquis, 265 Peachtree Center Avenue. Connect with Downtown stakeholders and Atlanta's real estate community to discuss Downtown's future growth and development. For more information contact Tahmida Shamsuddin at tahmida@atlantadowntown.com or call (404) 658-5982.

November 8, **Northeast Corridor Clean-Up.** 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m., on the BeltLine between Piedmont Park and North Highland Ave. Help create a usable connection between Piedmont Park and Freedom Park by picking up litter and removing kudzu from trees in the NE Corridor. Register at www.KeepAtlantaBeautiful.org

Support Amendment 2!
E-mail TADyes@gmail.com to order your
"Vote Yes on Amendment #2" yard sign.

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